



When was the Last Time Iowa was this Cold?



For Des Moines:

Lows

- The most recent cold low was -14 this past Christmas Eve (12/24/2013).
- The previous time the temperature was colder was on 01/02/2010 with a low of -17.
- On 01/16/2009 we hit -19, which is the coldest temperature since 1996 (-26 on 02/03).
- The all-time record low is -30 on 01/05/1884.

Highs

- Since 1996 we have only seen three days with highs below zero: -2 on 01/04/1999, -1 on 12/21/2008, and -4 on 01/15/2009.
- A high of -10 or colder has only happened in one year since 1917, that was in 1983 when it happened twice in December (the 19th and 24th). In Feb. 1996 the coldest high temperature was -9 on the 2nd and 3rd.
- The coldest high on record is -14 on 01/12/1912.

In terms of both highs and lows, the upcoming event will probably be the coldest at Des Moines since January 15-16, 2009 and possibly the coldest since February 2-3, 1996.

For Waterloo:

Lows

- The most recent cold low was -21 this past Christmas Eve (12/24/2013).
- The last time the temperature was lower than that was 01/16/2009 when they tied their all-time record low (first set on 03/01/1962) with a reading of -34.
- In 1996 the coldest temperature was -31 on both the 2nd and 3rd of February.



Highs

- The coldest on record is -16 on 02/02/1996.
- There are only two other occasions with highs below -13, those being highs of -15 on 12/24/1983 and 01/18/1994.
- The last time ALO had a high of -10 or lower was on 02/03/1996.

So in terms of lows, the temperature at ALO will only be the coldest since last week or since January 16, 2009. But in terms of highs, it will probably be the coldest since February 2-3, 1996 and may even approach the all-time record set during that event.

For Iowa (statewide):

The January 15-16, 2009 cold outbreak and February 2-3, 1996 outbreak are the most recent standards for comparison. Here are a few numbers to keep in mind from a statewide perspective:

Coldest high and low for January 15-16, 2009:

- Maquoketa had a high of only -15 on the 15th
- Coggon (Linn Co.) had a low of -40 on the 16th (lowest in IA since 1996)
- Lowest wind chill (ASOS/AWOS sites only) was at Cedar Rapids, -52 on the 15th (lowest in IA since 1996)

Coldest high and low for February 2-3, 1996:

- Fayette and Oelwein had a high of only -20 on the 2nd
- Elkader had a low of -47 on the 3rd (tied all-time IA record, Washta on Jan 12th, 1912)
- Lowest wind chill (ASOS/AWOS sites only) was at Mason City, -79 on the 2nd (
- old WC scale, translates to -56 now)

All-time record cold high for Iowa: No official record, but on glance lowest noted was -22 at Forest City on 01/05/1912

All-time record low for Iowa: -47 at Washta on 01/12/1912 and at Elkader on 02/03/1996